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THE WORKS OF THE AMERICAN ETCHERS.

IV.—PETER MORAN.



ENIUS, or even talent, generally stands alone in solitary grandeur. The Counts of Canossa can boast of but one Michelangelo, if the great artist really ennobled the family of that name. Lionardo da Vinci has no companion among his kindred. Sometimes a great luminary is accompanied by one or more satellites; but their light is overpowered and obscured by the splendors of the central sun. It is seldom that a number of stars of the same magnitude are found grouped together in close relationship. Still, there have been a few such cases. The Bellinis and the Bassanos may be cited among the Italians. A very marked instance is to be found in the Bemmels family,—artists, if not of great, at least of respectable reputation. No less than fourteen painters of this name are recorded, all sprung from the same stock, and handing down their traditions from the middle of the seventeenth to the confines of our own century. The Koekkoeks, great favorites not very long ago with American picture-buyers, are likewise an artistic tribe, although in point of numbers far inferior to the Bemmels. An interesting instance of the same kind is to be found in the Morans; and the curious feature in their case is, that not only are most of the members of the original family imbued with the artistic spirit, but they seem to draw towards themselves none but kindred natures, or to pass the contagion to all those who come into closer contact with them.

The three brothers, Edward, Thomas, and Peter Moran, are well known as successful artists, and from them the artistic influence has radiated upon a large circle of relatives. Mr. Edward Moran's sons are artists of promise. Mrs. Thomas Moran and her son Paul both handle the brush and the etching-needle, and Mrs. Peter Moran follows their example. Nor does the list stop here; for Mr. S. J. Ferris is a brother-in-law of the Morans, and his son, G. Ferris, is also a painter and an etcher.

Mr. Peter Moran, of Philadelphia, the youngest of the three brothers, was born in Bolton, Lancashire, England, in 1842, and came to America when a child. He commenced etching some time during the latter part of 1874, but produced only one plate, the interior of a blacksmith's shop, which he destroyed as unsatisfactory, not even retaining any impressions from it. The following is a complete list of the plates done by the artist up to date:¹—

1. *Donkeys and Sheep*. Etched on New Year's day, 1875. Signed, P. M. (in the sky).—Size of engraved surface, breadth $4\frac{1}{8}$ " ; height $3\frac{1}{8}$ ".
2. *A Summer Evening*. 1875. Signed, P. Moran (in the sky).—B. $5\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. $3\frac{1}{8}$ ".
3. *Cow and Calf*. 1875. Signed, P. M. (in the sky).—B. $3\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. $4\frac{1}{8}$ ".
4. *A Country Road*. 1875. From nature. Signed, P. M. (in the sky).—B. $5\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $3\frac{1}{2}$ ".
5. *A Showery Day*. 1875. Signed, P. M. (in the sky).—B. $5\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. 3".
6. *Spring*. 1875. Signed, P. M., the letters interlaced (twice, in the sky).—B. $5\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $3\frac{3}{8}$ ".
7. *Evening. Cattle crossing the Stream*. 1875. Signed, P. M. (in the water).—B. 7" ; h. $3\frac{1}{8}$ ".

¹ This list being *complete*, the plates are numbered. No numbers were given with the lists previously published, as they contained selections only.

8. *The Chariot Race. Circus Maximus.* After Wagner. Done in conjunction with Mr. S. J. Ferris. Signed, Peter Moran and S. J. Ferris, etched 1875. — B. $22\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. $8\frac{5}{8}$ ". Published by Messrs. Gebbie and Barrie.¹
9. *A Challenge.* 1875. Signed, P. Moran. — B. $31\frac{5}{8}$ " ; h. $2\frac{3}{4}$ ".
10. *Summer.* 1875. Signed, P. Moran. — B. $5\frac{3}{4}$ " ; h. 6".
11. *A Roadside Watering Place.* 1875. Signed, P. M. (in lower left-hand corner). — B. $21\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $31\frac{7}{8}$ ".
12. *Return of the Herd.* 1875. B. $10\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. 5".
13. *A Country Smithy.* 1875. Signed, P. M. (in lower left-hand corner). — B. $3\frac{7}{8}$ " ; h. $21\frac{3}{8}$ ".
14. *Study of Sheep.* 1876. — B. 6" ; h. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".
15. *The Source of the Stream.* 1876. Signed, P. M. — B. $2\frac{3}{4}$ " ; h. 7".
16. *Traveller attacked by Wolves.* After R. Ansdell, 1876. — B. 14" ; h. $9\frac{1}{8}$ ".
17. *Hiawatha.* After Thos. Moran. 1876. — B. $8\frac{1}{2}$ " ; h. $11\frac{3}{4}$ ". Plate owned by Mr. Thos. Moran.
18. *Hiawatha.* After Thos. Moran. 1876. — B. $11\frac{7}{8}$ " ; h. $8\frac{3}{4}$ ". Plate owned by Mr. Thos. Moran.
19. *Winter.* 1876. — B. $8\frac{1}{4}$ " ; h. $5\frac{3}{4}$ ".
20. *The Dying Lioness.* From the bronze group by Wolf. 1876. — B. 11" ; h. $10\frac{3}{8}$ ". Plate owned by the Fairmount Park Art Association.
21. *The Last Hope.* After Henriette Ronner. 1876. — B. $71\frac{5}{8}$ " ; h. $5\frac{1}{2}$ ".
22. *Cattle Ploughing.* After Rosa Bonheur. 1876. Signed P. Moran. — B. 9" ; h. $4\frac{1}{4}$ ". This and No. 21 for "Masterpieces of the International Exhibition, 1876." Published by Messrs. Gebbie and Barrie.
23. *Morning. A Dusty Road.* 1877. — B. $61\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. $41\frac{7}{8}$ ".
24. *The Noonday Rest.* 1877. Signed, P. M. (in lower right-hand corner). — B. $5\frac{5}{8}$ " ; h. $3\frac{5}{8}$ ". Published in this number of the AMERICAN ART REVIEW.
25. *The Dying Lioness.* From the bronze group by Wolf. 1877. Signed, P. Moran. Same subject as No. 20. — B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ " ; h. 6" from base to top of lion's head. Plate owned by Messrs. Gebbie and Barrie.
26. *The Cat feigning Death.* After B. Gempt. 1877. — B. 6" ; h. $8\frac{3}{8}$ ". For "Masterpieces," etc.
27. *The Ford.* 1878. — B. $71\frac{7}{8}$ " ; h. $31\frac{3}{8}$ ".
28. *Etchings by P. Moran.* 1878. — Frontispiece for the artist's etchings. Sketch from nature. B. $6\frac{1}{4}$ " ; h. $6\frac{3}{8}$ ".
29. *On the Neschamonie.* 1878. — B. $4\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. $2\frac{7}{8}$ ".
30. *Sunset. Cattle Drinking.* 1878. Signed, P. Moran. — B. $5\frac{3}{4}$ " ; h. $4\frac{1}{8}$ ".
31. *A Stream by the Willows.* 1879. — B. $4\frac{3}{4}$ " ; h. $3\frac{3}{8}$ ".
32. *Landscape and Cattle.* After Van Marcke. 1879. — B. $7\frac{7}{8}$ " ; h. 6". Published in the REVIEW for December, 1879.
33. *A Road by the Schuylkill.* From nature. 1879. Although executed in the year named, this plate is signed, in the lower right-hand corner: 8781. M. P. July. — Size of plate, b. 7" ; h. $6\frac{1}{4}$ ".
34. *Young Lady Reading.* 1879. Signed, P. Moran. Dry point. — Size of plate, b. $3\frac{5}{8}$ " ; h. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".
35. *Old Lady Reading.* 1879. Dry-point on zinc. — Size of plate, b. $6\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $7\frac{7}{8}$ ".

The greatest interest naturally attaches to the artist's original etchings, which—especially in proofs printed by Mr. Moran himself—form a most attractive collection. In nearly all of them, animals, which are Mr. Moran's specialty, are the prominent feature, but his rendering of landscape, especially in connection with cattle, is also charming. One of the great elements of Mr. Moran's success as an etcher lies in the correct drawing of his animals; another is to be sought in the vigor and boldness of his execution. In both he makes one feel that he is no longer groping, but that he knows his strength, and therefore goes at his work unhesitatingly, thus imparting a delightful feeling of security even to the beholder. It might be said, perhaps, that this self-confidence occasionally leads him into over-biting, especially in his backgrounds; but one would not want to exchange this fault, if fault it be, for timidity and lack of strength. In his composition and treatment Mr. Moran occasionally reminds us of other artists; but the resemblance is more in subject than anything else; and although undoubtedly Mr. Moran has carefully studied the best French etchers, his methods are thoroughly his own, and his individuality asserts itself at every step. It is most apparent in No. 12,—a magnificent composition, both in line and in light and shade, and so far the artist's *chef d'œuvre*,—and in Nos. 19 and 30. The latter, with its rather overpowering "impressional" sky, is likely to provoke criticism at first; but one returns to it again and again, and learns to admire. In the natural scene

¹ This plate is also mentioned in the list of the works of Mr. S. J. Ferris, REVIEW for January, p. 104. But the size there given is not quite correct.



represented the sky also was the most prominent feature which attracted and riveted the attention; it is but proper, therefore, that it should be so in the pictorial rendering. As a piece of powerful work, *The Dying Lioness*, No. 20, is worthy of especial mention. Opposed to it in delicacy are some of the smaller plates, of which the beautiful little *Country Smithy*, No. 13, is the type, and our own illustration an example. The two dry-points are mainly interesting from a technical point of view. Mr. Moran has made capital use of the bur in them, and the head of the young lady in No. 34 is charmingly soft and velvety in effect. In the drawing they do not equal the artist's other plates.

In his methods of work Mr. Moran follows the old ways, even to the use of the bordering wax, which, strange to say, he considers more convenient than the bath.

V.—THOMAS MORAN.



THOMAS MORAN—born in England in 1837, and brought to America when he was seven years of age—etched his first plate in 1860. Since then he has allowed his etcher's tools to rest, until the year 1879, when he took them up again with characteristic enthusiasm. His whole *œuvre*, thus far, comprises nine plates, which are here enumerated in the order of their production.

1. *Study of Trees*. First plate etched in 1860. — Size of plate, breadth $3\frac{3}{4}$ " ; height $5\frac{1}{2}$ ".
2. *A Bazaar*. — Size of engraved surface, breadth $3\frac{3}{8}$ " ; height $4\frac{3}{8}$ ".
3. *Bridge and Trees*. Signed with the artist's well-known monogram, T. and M. interlaced. — B. $4\frac{1}{4}$ " ; h. 8."
4. *Evening*. Signed with the monogram in the lower margin of the plate. — B. $11\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $7\frac{5}{8}$ ".
5. *Study of Willows*. Signed with the monogram. — Size of plate, b. $6\frac{3}{4}$ " ; h. 3".
6. *The Passaic Meadows*. Signed with the monogram. — Size of engraved surface, b. $8\frac{1}{2}$ " ; h. $5\frac{3}{8}$ ". Published with this number of the REVIEW.
7. *Ku-Ra-Tu. A Pai-Ute Girl*. Signed, T. Moran, and dated 1879. — B. $5\frac{3}{8}$ " ; h. $8\frac{1}{4}$ ".
8. *The Yellowstone River*. Signed with the monogram, and dated 1879. — B. $6\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $8\frac{7}{8}$ ".
9. *The Empty Cradle*. Signed with the monogram, and dated 1880. — B. $5\frac{5}{8}$ " ; h. $7\frac{3}{4}$ ".

There is a marked difference in these plates, owing to the fact, undoubtedly, that the artist has been experimenting. No. 1 is rather dry and formal; No. 2 is a bit of vigorous biting, almost Rembrandtesque, which to those to whom the etched line is in itself a pleasure will prove of great interest, and in which a curious but telling effect is produced by sand-papering; Nos. 3 and 4, also tolerably strongly bitten throughout, show the love of texture for which the artist's oil-paintings are noted; while in Nos. 5 to 9, which are more delicately bitten, there is a resemblance to his water-color work. The touch in Mr. Thomas Moran's etchings is peculiarly attractive. There is a nervous vitality in it, which makes every line an interesting subject of study. One of the most charming of these later plates is the little *Study of Willows*, No. 5, although the etching which accompanies the present notice is likewise a very good example of the artist's style. If a critical remark be permitted, one might be tempted to say that the distribution of color tends to break the unity of the composition.

Mr. Moran, who, it is well known, has made several trips to the Western territories, has been deeply impressed by the artistic possibilities of this part of the country and of its native inhabitants. The last three plates on the list are devoted to subjects there obtained, Nos. 7 and 9 representing Indian women, while No. 8 is the first of a series to be devoted to the wonderful scenery of the Yellowstone region.

S. R. KOEHLER.